

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 5492

LIMDIS

FROM BUNKER FOR ASST. SECRETARY OF THE ARMY VEYSEY, CHAIRMAN,
PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS WORKING GROUP, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: U.S.-PANAMA TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: UNITED STATES MOVEMENT
TOWARD THE NEW "PARTNERSHIP" RELATIONSHIP WITH PANAMA

I.

THIS IS MESSAGE NO. 2 FROM THE NEGOTIATORS APPLICABLE TO THE
SEPTEMBER, 1975 NEGOTIATING ROUND.

II.

A. AFTER HEARING THE REPORT, FROM PANAMA AS WELL AS
WASHINGTON, ON THE RECENT VISIT OF SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIALS HERE,
I BELIEVE THAT IT WAS EXCEEDINGLY USEFUL FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF
HELPING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND OUR NORMAL BILATERAL RELATIONS
WITH THIS COUNTRY.

III.

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A. RESPECTING ONE ELEMENT OF THAT VISIT I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE.

B. IF MY UNDERSTANDING IS CORRECT, GEORGE BROWN TOLD TORRIJOS THAT DURING THIS NEGOTIATING ROUND I WOULD BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR POSSIBLE ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY OUR GOVERNMENT AS EVIDENCE NOT ONLY OF OUR DESIRE TO REACH THE NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH PANAMA BUT ALSO OF OUR DESIRE TO BEGIN MOVING TOWARD THAT NEW RELATIONSHIP NOW.

C. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT BILL CLEMENTS HAS ASKED FOR SPEEDY ACTION ON THIS FRONT.

D. I CERTAINLY AGREE THAT WE SHOULD PROCEED IN THIS WAY, AND WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO BEGIN DOING SO DURING THIS VISIT. TORRIJOS IS CERTAIN TO FOLLOW UP ON THIS WITH ME.

E. ACCORDINGLY, I WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR INFORMATION ON WHAT THE JOINT CHIEFS AND THE ARMY SECRETARIAT ARE CONSIDERING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CINC AND THE GOVERNOR. THE NEGOTIATORS WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE THEIR PARTICULAR PERSPECTIVE TO THOSE CONSIDERATIONS AT AN EARLY STAGE. WE WILL ALSO NEED BILL JORDEN'S CONTRIBUTION, OF COURSE.

IV.

A. DEFENSE AND STATE OFFICERS HAVE BEEN STUDYING POSSIBLE "UNILATERAL ACTION" FOR SOME TIME, TO LITTLE AVAIL. MOST OF THOSE STUDIES THUS FAR WOULD REQUIRE LEGISLATION, WHICH WE CANNOT SEEK EXCEPT AT THE UNACCEPTABLE COST OF BEING CHARGED BY THE CONGRESS WITH TRYING TO AVOID THE TREATY ROUTE. OTHER STUDIES WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO PALPABLY COSMETIC TO BE USEFUL.

B. PERHAPS WE SHOULD TURN OUR ATTENTION TO CHANGES IN POLICY AND PRACTICE IN THE CANAL ZONE WHICH WOULD (A) NOT REQUIRE LEGISLATION; (B) SET IN MOTION NOW SOME OF THE CHANGES THAT WILL OCCUR UNDER THE TREATY, THEREBY PREPARING THE WAY FOR THEM WITH OUR PERSONNEL; AND (C) BE MEANINGFUL TO PANAMA. AS YOU KNOW, CONGRESSMEN METCALF AND LEGGETT HAVE REPEATEDLY MADE SUGGESTIONS ALONG THIS LINE.
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C. THE NEGOTIATORS MAY BE ABLE TO DEVELOP SOME OTHER THOUGHTS WHILE HERE, BUT WILL WAIT TO HEAR FROM YOU.
JORDEN

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